DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 418 445 CS 509 812

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TITLE Feedback: Breakfast of Champions.
PUB DATE 1998-04-00
NOTE 6p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Central States Communication Association (Chicago, IL, April 2-5, 1998).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Audience Response; Classroom Techniques; Communication Skills; *Computer Uses in Education; Educational Media; *Feedback; Higher Education; Learning Processes; *Public Speaking
IDENTIFIERS *Technology Integration; *University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

ABSTRACT

Feedback is an important skill that people need to learn in life. Feedback is crucial in a public speaking class to improve speaking skills. Providing and receiving feedback is what champions feed on to be successful, thus feedback is called the "Breakfast of Champions." Feedback builds speakers' confidence. Providing in-depth feedback is also important because it forms a positive relationship between the provider and the receiver. Through the use of computer technology in the form of public folders under Microsoft Exchange, students at the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, can provide and receive feedback. Under the Communication 101 public folder students will enter into their section folder; within their section they will find sub-folders for the various assignments they will be doing throughout the semester. One of the sub-folders is termed "feedback." This folder allows students to provide more detailed feedback. Utilizing public folders to provide feedback allows students the opportunity to learn how to construct "friendly" constructive feedback. Once students become comfortable providing positive and constructive feedback, an in-class discussion can be brought up on how to transfer that feedback face-to-face in class. (CR)

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ED 418 445

Feedback: Breakfast of Champions

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There are several key issues when discussing feedback and its relevance in a public speaking course. The first relevant issue is that feedback is an important skill that people need to learn in life. Second, feedback is crucial in a public speaking class in order to improve speaking skills. The two issues mentioned above are called the "Breakfast of Champions" for the reason that to improve in something, whether it be public speaking or managing employees. Providing and receiving feedback is what champions feed on to be successful. It is my intent to provide an understanding on how public folders enhances feedback sessions in a public speaking class. To create this understanding, the importance of feedback in a public speaking class will first be discussed. Secondly, roadblocks in providing and receiving feedback "in class" will be explored. Lastly, the benefits of utilizing public folders for feedback in a public speaking class will conclude the discussion.

In a public speaking class, feedback is one of the most important elements to educating students. Feedback builds confidence within the speaker. It has been noted that public speaking is the second scariest thing known to humans aside from death which is number one. Providing simple feedback in the form of positive affirmations instills confidence in speakers. In order for speakers to receive a complete breakfast of feedback, providers must get in-depth. This means that providers of feedback must present specifics on the positives and so called "negatives" of a speaker's presentation. Through experience, individuals learn how to provide complete feedback. This is something that individuals rarely due. Many times individuals only provide positive affirmations such as "you did great" or "I thought you did an excellent job." This leaves the speaker wondering, "what exactly did I do that was good?!" It is like eating a

doughnut for breakfast. Sure it tastes great but it does not satisfy a complete breakfast full of calories, vitamins and nutrients. In the same way, feedback must be complete to satisfy the individual in growing as a speaker. Providing in-depth feedback is also important because it forms a positive relationship between the provider and receiver of feedback. The provider of feedback learns how to become attuned to detail and as they provide detailed feedback, it displays to the speaker that the provider truly understands what she/he is saying. This forms a friendly, empathic relationship between the two. However, with the good there comes the "bad".

It is crucial not only in public speaking but life in general that individuals learn and experience providing "negative" feedback. The word negative is cautiously used for the reason that nothing is negative, especially in public speaking. Therefor I will utilize the word constructive when dealing with more commonly known as "negative" feedback. In order for feedback to be totally useful, the speaker needs to receive both positive and constructive feedback. It is very evident that feedback is crucial to improve individuals' speaking skills. However, within class there are some difficulties with providing effective feedback described above.

There are several roadblocks in providing feedback "in class." The first roadblock is time constraints. At the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point, speaking classes are 50 minutes in length. This may appear to be a lot of time but it is not when you have an average of 24 students in class. It may also seem like a lot of time depending on how many speeches students have to do. It is very evident that the more opportunities a speaker has to speak, the more effective that person becomes at speaking. Since that is the goal, UW- Stevens Point utilizes 7 speeches in a 16 week period. With

24 students in a class meeting 50 minutes twice a week, it is predictable that time is an issue in relation to providing effective feedback.

The second roadblock in providing feedback "in class" is the audience may feel uncomfortable providing feedback. Students are intimidated when they are asked to provide constructive feedback in class. The majority of students will only provide positive affirmations towards a speaker. Students feel that they will be rude and offending if they provide open and honest feedback. Thus robbing the speaker of critical information in what they did well and what they need to work on to improve. The roadblocks in providing feedback can be conquered.

Through the use of computer technology in the form of public folders, students receive a complete breakfast of feedback. University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point's computer system offers public folders under Microsoft Exchange. When students access their e-mail account under Microsoft Exchange they may enter public folders. Within public folders students will find various academic classes that utilize public folders. One of the courses is Communication 101. Under the Communication 101 folder students will enter into their section folder. Within their section they will find sub-folders for the various assignments they will be doing throughout the semester. One of the sub-folders is termed "feedback."

The feedback folder allows students to provide more detailed feedback. Students have one day to go through their notes on how a speaker performed and post a lengthy message in the folder. This ultimately provides the speaker with more information to analyze to improve her/his speaking skills. Utilizing public folders to provide feedback also allows students to learn how to construct "friendly" constructive feedback in a

comfortable way. Once students become comfortable providing positive and constructive feedback, an "in class" discussion can be brought up on how to transfer that feedback face-to-face in class.

It is very clear that providing and receiving feedback is extremely important in developing effective speakers. Realizing the importance of feedback, the roadblocks that occur in class and the benefits of utilizing public folders, students will receive a complete breakfast of feedback.